

# GROW YOUR OWN VEGETABLE STIR FRY

**(Cool season or warm season veggies)**

Stir frying is a Chinese cooking technique for preparing food in a wok or in a very hot pan. The food is stirred and tossed very quickly using wooden or metal cooking utensils. Many of the ingredients for stir fry are common and easy to grow. Depending on which vegetables you choose to grow; you could have either a warm season garden planted in April, or a cool season garden planted in March and again in August.

## Getting Started

1. A back yard area is a great site for you to grow vegetables to stir fry. Make sure you have loose and well-drained soil and that the garden is located where it will receive at least 6-8 hours of sun. If you have limited space, select one large or several smaller containers for the plants that you will be growing. Make sure that they are deep enough to let all of the roots grow. A clean, recycled 5-gallon bucket is ideal for large plants like peppers. Clean the container thoroughly before you begin.
2. Make sure that your container has holes in the bottom. If it doesn't, you must drill or cut drainage holes in the bottom of the container. Younger gardeners should seek help from an adult with this step.
3. Fill the container with enough soil to reach to about 1-inch below the top of the container.
4. Moisten the potting soil with a little water to make it easier to work once it is in the pot. It takes time for dry soil to get wet.

## Planting Your Garden

1. Decide which veggies you want to use and then determine if they grow best in cool weather or warm. Squash and peppers grow best in warm weather. Squash are easy to start from seed. Peppers are best planted as transplants. These can go in after April 15. You can grow your own from seed or buy healthy plants from local garden centers. You can use seeds or bulb "sets" for your onions.
2. Make a hole in the soil big enough for the plant's roots. Backfill and firm the soil gently around the plants.
3. Water the plants well to make sure they feel welcome in their new homes.

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 🌱 A garden or large container at least 5 gallons in size with holes drilled in the bottom.
- 🌱 Enough potting soil to fill the container
- 🌱 Seeds or seedlings for a few of your favorite vegetable plants. Choose from the following:
  - 🌸 Yellow Squash
  - 🌸 Zucchini Squash
  - 🌸 Peppers
  - 🌸 Onions
  - 🌸 Cabbage
  - 🌸 Bok Choy
- 🌱 A sunny location for your garden
- 🌱 Broccoli
- 🌱 Carrots



## SUMMER SQUASH STIR FRY

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 yellow or sunburst squash, sliced
- 2 zucchinis, sliced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tbsp. oil
- 2 tbsp. water
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- Dash curry powder
- ¼ tsp. salt
- Dash Tabasco sauce or
- ½ tsp. hot sauce (optional)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a wok or skillet, sauté onions and garlic in oil until onions are soft, about 3-5 minutes
2. Add rest of ingredients except hot sauce and stir fry until squash is soft, about 8-10 minutes. Turn off heat, add optional ingredients and stir until well mixed.

## Caring For Your Garden

1. Keep your containers in a location that receives between 6 and 8 hours of full sun each day.
2. Make sure that the garden is watered. For containers, check the soil every day. The soil should dry out slightly before you water again. You will probably need to water a few times per week.
3. Keep an eye out for insects and other problems. If insects start eating your plants, get assistance for proper identification and best control measure.

## Harvesting Your Ingredients

1. Harvest squash when they are still small and tender. Peppers are ready to pick when they are large enough to be used.
2. Snip the tops of onions to use as green onions or leave in the garden to harvest in late summer as a bulb.

## Try Something Different

- ☼ You can add any type of protein, such as beef or chicken, to a vegetarian stir fry. Any vegetable can be used: broccoli, cabbage, and kale also work well.



Material modified by Karen Neill, Horticulture Agent, NC Cooperative Extension, Guilford County, with permission from John Porter, WVU, Kanawha County Extension Agent



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